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PRESENTATION
OF THE
ROYAL AWARDS

TO CAPTAIN R. F. BURTON AND CAPTAIN JOHN PALLISER.

THE President read the following statements explanatory of the grounds on which the Council had awarded the Royal Medals respectively :—

The Founder's Medal of the Royal Geographical Society has been adjudicated to Captain R. F. Burton, of the Bombay Army, who has explored a vast region of Eastern and Central Africa never before traversed by any geographer ; and for the discovery of the great internal lake of Tanganyika—the more northern lake of Nyanza being discovered by his coadjutor, Captain Speke.

Captain Burton is well known for his most interesting journey, under the auspices of this Society, as an Afghan pilgrim, to the Holy places in Arabia in the autumn of 1853, as recorded in our Journal, vols. xxiv. and xxv., and in the popular account of it published by himself. These volumes showed Captain Burton to be an accomplished Orientalist, and admirably fitted for a traveller among the difficulties of Eastern countries.

In the ensuing year he volunteered to explore Eastern Africa from Berbera to Zanzibar, accompanied by Lieutenant Stroyan and Lieutenant Speke, the latter of whom had been for several years collecting the fauna of Little Tibet and the Himálaya Mountains. In a preliminary journey, Captain Burton, alone, succeeded in reaching and describing Harar, never before visited by Europeans. Lieutenant Speke, on his part, also alone, explored the interior of the Somali country, made extensive collections and many observations, and produced a map of those tracts. The farther prosecution of that expedition, when these officers were united with Stroyan and Herne, was frustrated by an attack of the Somalis, in which Lieutenant Stroyan was killed, and Lieutenants Burton and Speke were both severely wounded. These occurrences are recorded in

our Journal, vol. xxv., and also in the work 'First Footsteps in Eastern Africa.'

In 1856 Captain Burton proceeded with Captain Speke, under the auspices of our Society, and assisted by the Foreign Office and the Hon. East India Company, to Zanzibar; and in January, 1857, made a tentative journey to Fuga, the account of which, by Captain Burton, with a map constructed from Captain Speke's field-book, is given in our Proceedings, and will appear in a more extended form in the next volume of the Journal.

On June 26th, 1857, Captains Burton and Speke started from Zanzibar for the interior, and succeeded in reaching the great Lake Tanganyika, 300 miles long and 30 broad, and about 700 miles from the coast; having travelled, at a rough estimate, from 1200 to 1500 miles. Their very careful and complete itineraries, maps and field-books, have been received; Captain Speke having made astronomical observations which determine the latitude and longitude of the places they visited. These results, as well as the determination of the principal altitudes, were obtained in spite of severe hardships, privations, and illnesses.

A marked feature of the expedition is the journey of Captain Speke from Unyanyembé to the vast inland fresh-water lake called Nyanza, the south end of which was fixed by him at $2^{\circ} 30'$ S. lat. and $33^{\circ} 30'$ E. long., which, being estimated to have a width of about 90 miles, is said to extend northwards for upwards of 300 miles.

For the very important results of the expedition—of which Captain Burton was the leader—as well as for his former bold and adventurous researches, the Council have considered him to be highly entitled to the honour conferred on him.

The President then addressed Captain Burton in these words:—

"Captain Burton,—I have now to request you to accept this Medal, with the assurance that, as the geographers of England have watched your various and most adventurous explorations with the deepest interest, so I rejoice that the Council of this Society has had it in their power thus to recompense your highly distinguished services.

"I must also take this opportunity of expressing to you my hearty approbation of the very important part which your colleague, Captain Speke, has played in the course of the African expedition headed by yourself. In the Address to the Society, which is to follow, when I further advert to your meritorious services, I shall dwell upon the discovery of the vast interior Lake of Nyanza, made by your associate when you were prostrated by

illness,—a discovery which in itself is also, in my opinion, well worthy of the highest honour this Society can bestow.”

Captain Burton replied:—

“Mr. President,—I thank you, Sir, most sincerely for this honour, and for the kind and flattering expressions by which you have enhanced its value. Allow me, at the same time, to embrace the opportunity of expressing my gratitude to this powerful and influential Society for the favours of past years. When comparatively unknown I was enabled, by the generous support of the Royal Geographical Society, to enter upon the field of Arabian exploration. At a subsequent period their interest forwarded me into the Somali country; and, on the present occasion, to them—and to them only—do I ascribe the success which has attended my last expedition. This valuable gift will remain with me a lasting memorial of my debt of gratitude.

“You have alluded, Sir, to the success of the last expedition. Justice compels me to state the circumstances under which it attained that success. To Captain J. H. Speke are due those geographical results to which you have alluded in such flattering terms. Whilst I undertook the history and ethnography, the languages and the peculiarities of the people, to Captain Speke fell the arduous task of delineating an exact topography, and of laying down our positions by astronomical observations—a labour to which at times even the undaunted Livingstone found himself unequal. I conclude with the warmest wishes for the prosperity of the Royal Geographical Society, and with expressing my desire that we may have a further opportunity of prosecuting our labours in this good cause.”

The Patron's or Victoria Gold Medal has been awarded to Captain John Palliser, for the successful results of the exploration of large tracts in British North America by the expedition under his command during the years 1857–8; and more particularly for the determination of the existence of practicable passes across the Rocky Mountains within the British territories.

This expedition—as is well known—originated in the pressing recommendation of the Royal Geographical Society; and the officers appointed by Her Majesty's Government to serve under Captain Palliser were, Dr. Hector, naturalist and geologist; Lieutenant Blakiston, magnetician; Mr. Sullivan, secretary; and M. Bourgeau, botanist.

One of the chief geographical features of the first year's survey was the discovery of a low waterparting, hitherto unknown to us, near the “Qui Appelle Lakes,” where the water flows eastwards into the Assiniboine River, and westwards into the Saskatchewan.

A long and rapid winter journey, with sledges and dogs, from Fort Carlton, by Forts Pitt and Edmonton, to Mountain House, on the eastern flank of the Rocky Mountains, was accomplished by Dr. Hector to procure men and horses, and during which he obtained valuable preliminary information. Numerous astronomical and physical observations were made by Dr. Hector and Mr. Sullivan at Fort Carlton; the former of these sending home a clear sketch of the geological structure of the vast region of the Prairie country, with its horizontal strata of cretaceous and tertiary formations, as contrasted with the rocky eastern country traversed by the canoe route between Lakes Superior and Winnipeg. In the same period, Lieutenant (now Captain) Blakiston made, as we are informed by General Sabine, many important observations in Terrestrial Magnetism.

In the last summer—leaving Fort Carlton, and approaching the Rocky Mountains midway between the north and south branches of the Saskatchewan—Captain Palliser divided his force into three parties. Accompanied by Mr. Sullivan, he traversed the Rocky Mountains himself by the Kananaski Pass to the south of Old Bow Fort, the summit level of the route being fixed at 5985 feet above the sea. Reaching the drainage of the Pacific, he descended the Kutanie River till he met with north-flowing lakes, which are the real sources of the great Columbia; and thence, following the Kutanie River southward along the Tobacco Plains to near the American boundary, he recrossed the chain by the Kutanie Pass, nearly 6000 feet above the sea, in lat. $49^{\circ} 30'$. Captain Blakiston, also (as since reported), traversed and levelled this pass, which is in British territory, and returned to the plains of the Saskatchewan by the Boundary Pass, the greater part of which is in American territory.

Whilst M. Bourgeau remained to collect plants in a favourable spot amid the Rocky Mountains, in lat. 51° , Dr. Hector traversed the chain by the Vermilion Pass, in $51^{\circ} 10'$, emerging into the Pacific drainage on the banks of the Kutanie River. The height of this pass was determined to be 4944 feet, and it is therefore much lower than the other passes, which were examined. Threading his way to the north around two lofty mountains, which he named Mount Goodsir and Mount Vaux, he travelled over high land to the N.N.W. until he passed round the flanks of the highest mountain in this part of the range, 15,789 feet high, in lat. 52° , which he named Mount Murchison; and then following the north

Saskatchewan from its glacial sources, he descended to Mountain House on the east, and regained Fort Edmonton, charged with numerous geological as well as astronomical and physical observations.

For the vigorous execution of his duties, the judicious distribution of the parties under his command, and particularly for having successfully carried out the wishes of the Royal Geographical Society and the instructions of Her Majesty's Government, in determining the existence of several practicable passes across the Rocky Mountains of British North America (hitherto not laid down on any published map), between the American boundary, or 49°, and 52° N. lat., the Council have awarded the Patron's Medal to Captain John Palliser.

The President then addressed the Earl of Carnarvon in these words:—

“Lord Carnarvon,—It gives me great satisfaction to place in your hands, as the representative of the Secretary for the Colonies, this the Patron's or Victoria Medal of the Royal Geographical Society.

“Knowing as I do that the deepest interest in the Palliser Expedition has been felt by the Secretaries for the Colonies of the last and present Administration, I also know that neither Mr. Labouchere, under whose auspices these researches were organised, nor Sir Edward B. Lytton, who has vigorously supported them, can attach more importance to their issue than your Lordship does in coming here to receive this Medal.

“Pray, therefore, preserve it until Captain Palliser, after traversing the Rocky Mountains and British Columbia, shall arrive in England; and then beg him to consider it as the best reward the geographers can offer to him, in honour of the important services performed by the expedition under his command.”

The Earl of Carnarvon replied:—

“Sir,—In accepting, on behalf of Captain Palliser, the Medal which, by the award of the Geographical Society and yourself, has been assigned to him for the conduct of the expedition in British North America, I greatly regret the absence of Sir Edward Lytton, who has from the first taken a deep interest in the success of the expedition, and to whom the task which I have now undertaken more properly belongs. At the same time I may, from the information to which I have had access at the Colonial Office, safely endorse the praise which you have given to Captain Palliser for the skill and perseverance, the practical energy and discrimination which he has evinced—essential qualities in any officer situated as he has been.

“The expedition which he has conducted has already achieved

considerable results. Whilst the tide of emigration in the United States rolls westward some 200 or 300 miles every year, we have not been altogether idle north of the 49th parallel. It may now almost be said that three links have been forged in the great chain of regular communication from the Atlantic to the Pacific, stretching across some 3000 miles of continent.

“Within the last two years an expedition has been sent out by the Canadian Government to explore the country which lies between Lake Superior and the Red River settlement. The reports of the expedition are in print, are accessible to every one, and deserve an attentive consideration.

“From the Red River settlement to the base of the Rocky Mountains Captain Palliser has conducted his inquiries; and in the wonderful rise of the new colony of British Columbia, may be traced the completion, in outline at least, of the long line of communication.

“It is not now unreasonable to look forward to the establishment of a regular system of transit, commencing from Nova Scotia and the shores of New Brunswick, passing through Canada, touching upon the Red River settlement, crossing the prairies of the Saskatchewan, passing through the Vermilion Pass, where we know that the inclination is so moderate that nature has placed no insurmountable obstacles to the construction of a railway, till it reaches the gold-bearing colony of British Columbia, creating fresh centres of civilisation, and consolidating British interests and feelings.

“It only remains for me to undertake that the Medal which you have placed in my hands shall be duly conveyed to Captain Palliser; and I feel sure that this tribute of praise on the part of the Geographical Society will be held by him as the most valuable memorial of his long, arduous, and successful expedition.”

A Gold Watch having been adjudicated by the Council to Mr. John Macdougall Stuart “for his remarkable exploration in South Australia, undertaken at his own expense, and which led to the signal discovery of 18,000 square miles of valuable and well-watered pastoral country, far to the north of the western saline region of that colony”—

The President, in delivering the watch to Count Strzelecki, thus spoke:—

“To you, Count Strzelecki, who, at your own expense, and animated solely by the love of discovery, explored many years ago the water-parting of Eastern Australia, I confide this watch. In requesting you to have it conveyed to Mr. Macdougall Stuart (who was well trained in Australian adventure by our medallist Sturt), I beg you to assure him, that I have read the modest account of his great success with true gratification, and have rejoiced in the

hearty commendation bestowed upon his conduct by the Governor of South Australia, Sir R. G. Macdonnell. The bold explorer will, I have no doubt, consider this memento of our esteem to be much enhanced by receiving it through the hands of so distinguished an Australian traveller as yourself."

Count Strzelecki replied :—

"Sir Roderick,—I am deeply indebted to you, not only for the flattering choice which you have made of me as the medium of transmitting this award of the Council to Mr. Macdougall Stuart, but also for the kind and courteous manner in which you have commented upon the services rendered to geography by my fellow Australian explorer.

"I need not assure you, Sir, that this mark of the approbation of the Royal Geographical Society, whilst it stamps the value of the journeys and important discoveries of Mr. Stuart, will be to him both a proud memorial of those services, and a fresh stimulus to his further exertions in the cause of geography."
